

66-365

26 January 1966

Dear Clark:

Following yesterday's meeting of the Board, I have looked into the questions raised during the discussion regarding an Intelligence Memorandum entitled, "Hanoi's Reaction to the Bombing Lull." As you remember, this memorandum was produced by the Office of Current Intelligence (OCI) within the Directorate of Intelligence, and some of the members expressed concern whether such a memorandum ought not to have been produced as a coordinated estimate by the Board of National Estimates.

I have reviewed this matter and feel that the following pertinent facts regarding this memorandum will be of interest:

a. The above memorandum was written in response to a personal request from the Secretary of Defense for a current statement by my people on this subject. Mr. McNamara did not request a coordinated National Intelligence Estimate, as he has done on many other occasions, but instead required something in the nature of a CIA status report. CIA being the repository of intelligence from the entire community, keeps this "all source" intelligence continually up dated for analysis and evaluation to serve the special request of the Government. Reading the memorandum in its entirety, I find it is essentially that, and not really estimative.

b. I am sure you are aware that the Office of Current Intelligence -- the producing office of this above memorandum -- has a substantial research and analytic capability, as well as a current reportorial capability. In fact, this office serves as the principal research and analysis facility within CIA in support of the Board of National Estimates.

c. As is done in the preparation of all such memoranda within the Directorate of Intelligence, this memorandum was coordinated with the Office of National Estimates. I am assured by my most

experienced intelligence officer, the Deputy Director for Intelligence, that he habitually reviews these memoranda prior to issuance and in this case the views expressed are consistent with those of the Board of National Estimates.

In my role as the principal intelligence advisor for the President and the members of the National Security Council, I utilize several means but always the best combinations of mature judgments to produce and convey significant information to the President and his chief advisors. On occasion, of course, I brief them orally. On other occasions, I provide them with current intelligence in the form of daily reports and ad hoc memoranda. On still other occasions I cause the preparation of National Intelligence Estimates containing the coordinated views of the members of the United States intelligence community.

Taking into account the nature of the information and the analytic judgments contained in the memorandum in question and the urgent request of the Secretary of Defense, I am satisfied that this matter was correctly handled.

I am hopeful that this review of the circumstances attending the production of this memorandum will be helpful to you and the members of your committee.

Sincerely,

s/ W.F. "Red" Raborn

W. F. Raborn

lcc - Each member of the Board and the Exec. Secretary

The Honorable Clark Clifford
Chairman
President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board
Washington, D. C.

R.J. Smith/mfb
Orig by hand to Clark Clifford -- 297 EOB
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